

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

EDITED BY GEORGE HOUSTON.

No. 19. NEW-YORK, NOVEMBER 29, 1828. VOL. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTIONS.

Concluded from page 300.

But you still declare, that God has adopted, and is pleased with only one mode of worship ; that all others are false or wrong ; that he can not be pleased with those who are in error, and do not follow him as he has dictated. Leaving the proofs which you may draw from the Scriptures, to which your opponents lay the same claim, and returning to plain reasoning, I would ask, if God is not the common Father of all ? Is not mankind in his power, as clay in the hands of the potter, capable of any form, make or impression ? If, then, it were the will or pleasure of the deity to be adored only in one kind of worship, has he not only to will it, and his will to be obeyed ? Can the clay resist the hands of the potter, or man the will of his creator ? If without his approbation or will we cannot lift our arm, can we possibly offend him by our belief ? If a father, blessed with a numerous offspring, should wish those children on a certain day to address him in one particular form, and he had only to mention his wish to each to be obeyed, and should only to one particular favourite communicate his design, leaving some in doubt and others totally ignorant of his wish, and on the day appointed punish with the greatest severity all but his favourite for such doubts and ignorance which his neglect of information had occasioned ; what, I say, but an unjust and cruel tyrant could you deem such a father ? And what else do those advocates for one system make of the deity ? If God has given us a free will to judge for ourselves, and we exercise it to the best of our power, can he consistently with justice or mercy punish us for following that which appears to us right ?

But let us examine how we became attached to one particular system of worship. Is it not in a great measure through the chance of birth ? Do not the first impressions received from our parents become mostly lasting on the mind ? Do you not suppose the same child, born of christian parents, who follows the opinions of those parents, if it were possible he could be born of Mahomedans, would be a good Musselman ? Does not a good man, educated in each sect, following the principles inculcated in his youth and taught by his pastor, become riveted in his opinion,

without examining the principles of those who surround him, and firmly resting on the goodness of his cause, sink to death?

And how dies the moral man of every sect? Is it not with the same calmness? But is not the Catholic and Quaker, Protestant and Presbyterian, Jew and Mahomedan, equally obliged to birth and education for their principles? How can you condemn the untaught Hottentot, the savage Indian, or the innocent Peruvian, for not following a doctrine, the name of which they never heard? And can you suppose the father of mercies can damn them for this natural ignorance. Cast your eyes but for a moment round that part of our globe known to us; see the millions of beings that people its surface, to whom the very name of christian is unknown. Enumerate, if you possibly can, the numbers which must have preceded (in the same ignorance) the present race; then compare them to the followers of Christ, and see what a superior multitude presents itself. Lay then your hand upon your heart, and say, if you can, you believe they are damned forever.

But supposing for a moment (though the supposition is impious) that the deity would really act as you express it, and should adopt your desperate and savage method. Fancy all the inhabitants of the earth, those who are, and those who have been, of whatever tribe, colour and persuasion, collected together in one general mass, and that the disposer of all things should decree that of all this countless multitude, first should be selected the followers of one system; of that system the believers of one faith; of that faith those only on whom he had bestowed his grace; and of those selected none should be saved but the elected few who had acted consistently with his will in all things; and that the remainder should be hurled headlong to destruction. Where is the man who would wish for so desperate a chance, or who is bold enough to say, I am safe? Here you behold countless millions, of which the busy fancy of man cannot enumerate their number, indiscriminately plunged into an abyss of everlasting misery, while a few, in comparison a handful, are selected for happiness. Is it thus you would suppose the justice of God acts? Or is it not the arrogant fancy of your distempered brains, who, so conscious of your fancied importance, can dictate to God himself?

Let us carry our ideas a step higher, and fancy ourselves near the tribune of justice, beholding the souls of men indiscriminately arraigned at the awful bar, to give an account of their past life. Let us select a few whose moral actions, when weighed in the scale of justice, shall be found equal, though each have followed a different mode of worship. When asked with respect to his religion, the Catholic may say, "Taught by my parents and priests a mode of faith which has been handed down to posterity from the time of Christ, I have firmly believed and followed it. I have not troubled myself in examining the doctrines of those I supposed heretics, but have been a true believer in that system which I have been taught to believe you planted and sealed with your blood."

The Protestant may say, "I, too, have followed the doctrines of my parents; the legislature of my country has selected a faith which appeared to me right; I have followed its ritual, and have conformed to its mode of worship, not doubting but it would lead me to heaven."

The dissenter might exclaim, "O lord, I in some measure have fol-

lowed the worship of my fathers ; but being taught by men endowed with a greater degree of knowledge than myself, that certain modes of faith or worship practised by my ancestors were not in their opinions consistent with reason, and their arguments convincing my understanding, I joined their opinion. I have worshipped you in that way which appeared to me best ; and supposing your foreknowledge had predicted who should be saved, I have felt comfort from an idea I might be one of the elect."

The Jew might say, "great Jehovah, I was taught that you were pleased to deliver your law to Moses, who has handed it to posterity. I have practised the laws and precepts which he taught, not doubting but you were the author. I have not been able to offer sacrifices, because my nation was driven from their country ; but what I could, I did perform. I have lived with a people who supposed the Messiah had appeared, but as it did not appear to me true, and their assertions did not convince my understanding, I still followed the precepts of my forefathers, supposing that to be just, and the surest road to happiness."

The Mahomedan may say, "Oh God of my fathers, born of parents who taught me from my infancy that the Koran was of divine origin, and surrounded by millions believing the same, I followed its precepts. Convinced it was your divine will, I have conformed to its dogmas, and have worshipped you in the best manner my understanding would permit."

The untaught Indian, on discovering the deity, and being informed he had planted a religion through the means of Jesus, might exclaim, "Thou great and unknown cause of my existence, thou wast pleased to create me on a spot of ground excluded from the more civilized part of mankind, I followed the precepts which my ignorant parents taught me ; surrounded by objects which my ignorant mind could not comprehend, I was led to seek a being superior to myself, but my mind, enveloped in darkness, could not comprehend thee ; discovering, therefore, every blessing flow from the sun, I supposed it a God, and paid my adoration to it. How could I comprehend the religion you planted in another quarter of the world, when I was ignorant that there were any other parts but which I inhabited ? How could I be a believer in Jesus, when the very name was a stranger to my language ? Can your goodness then be offended for that ignorance which was to me unavoidable ?"

The deist and man of letters, born in the bosom of christianity, and bred in the lap of science, when called to account for scepticism, may defend himself by saying, "All powerful Creator, thou wast pleased to create and endow me with an understanding, as a rule to steer and guide my conduct by ; that understanding I have exercised to the best of my power. I have been presented with a number of creeds and revelations produced by different men, and at different times, each declaring it proceeded from divine authority for the instruction and benefit of mankind ; I have examined its contents which I found differing and opposite to each other ; I was convinced you could not be the author of contradictions, and as no one conveyed a sufficiency of reasoning to convince my understanding, I was doubtful of the whole. I considered you the creator of my body and soul, and as you stamped the form of my face, had it been your wish to be worshipped in any particular form, you would

have stamped it on my heart ; by which means I could not err. Seeing, then, you were not pleased to stamp on mankind your will as to form of worship or belief, I considered you as equally pleased with any form they might adopt, provided it tended your glory and the good of each other. If I have been in an error it was an error of ignorance, and not of my will ; I have exercised the reasoning faculty, with which you endowed me, to find the truth, and I have practised that which appeared to me right."

Leaving, then, for a moment the goodness and mercy which we attribute to the deity, and referring only to that justice which man would adopt, where is the being which would condemn either of those characters ? Each differs from the rest, yet each has the same claim on justice and mercy ; and can we then suppose that He, who is mercy itself, and who knows the secret motives of our hearts, can damn to eternity for the error of ignorance or opinion ? If, then, on reasoning from the strict rule of justice and mercy, we can see no cause for God to condemn, why then should man despise his brother ? Why feel a pleasure in torturing a being endowed with the same feelings as himself ? Why persecute him for opinions because he is in your power ? Why feel a hatred because he differs from you ? Why suppose he will be punished because he worships not in the same form as you ? And why (worst of all) impiously arrogate to yourselves to dictate for the deity, and boldly assert, that a being created by the same God, warmed by the same sun, and protected by the same Providence, shall be damned to eternity for an erroneous opinion ? Do you call yourselves christians and followers of Christ, and practise this ? Is it in the declaration he makes, of loving God above all things, and thy neighbour as thyself, you can find it ? Or is it not rather in the corruption of your own hearts ?

You pretend you love God, and cry out, "We follow his precepts." In what ? Is it in the torture and persecution of your brother ?

Do you really love God ? Follow, then, his precepts ; yet ask not man for those precepts, he may deceive.

The deity has presented you with a gospel, which no one can mistake, alter, or abridge ; which all men, in all climes, and in all languages, can read, and which is equally open to the eyes of the learned and unlearned. It is the great volume of nature, or creation ; in that there can be no error of opinion, it is plain and simple, admitting of no doubts, and formed to the meanest capacity ; examine well the page ; look there for an example worthy of imitation. Do you want to contemplate the glory of God ? Behold the vast extent of the heavens and earth. Do you want to draw a lesson of justice ? Observe the sure and certain punishment which nature inflicts upon vice. Do you want to see an attribute of mercy ? Behold it in his forbearing to punish the guilty. Do you want to see a true system of benevolence ? Look only to nature, see the same sun, the same earth, the same showers, warm and cherish every one. Behold the produce equally divided to all, who, through industry, seek it, of whatever opinion, complexion, or climate. In fine, would you love God ? Follow his example by loving each other, not so much by prayers or words, but as he does, by actions. Do you wish for others to bear with your opinion ? Set an example in imitation of the deity,

and bear with theirs. Do you wish to receive mercy? Imitate God, and shew it to others. Do you wish to find happiness? Leave opinion to the maker of all things; love one another; be industrious; contemplate nature, follow its example and abide by its precepts, happiness shall then crown your days; peace shall be in your dwelling; mankind shall respect you; your children will love you; the evening of your life will move happily away; and you will sink to rest, smiling still in death.

DOUBTS OF INFIDELES.

1. How can the attributes of God be vindicated, in having performed so great a number of miracles, for a long succession of very distant ages, and so few in latter times? If they were performed for the instruction of those times only, are they not equally necessary at present for us? Or, if those ancient miracles were intended likewise for our instruction, are they adequate to the purpose? Can God, who gave us reason, act inconsistent with its dictates; and is it rational or fair to demand our belief of things, which are in their own nature far removed from common belief, or common sense, and require something more than the usual testimony of history for their support? When Levy affirms (T. Livii, lib. xxii. cap. 1.) that the Gauls conspired against Hannibal, we admit and believe the fact; but when in the same chapter he speaks of shields sweating blood, of its raining hot stones at Arpi, and the like, we justly reject and disbelieve these improbable assertions; neither is any credit given to the account of the wonderful method of curing diseases by the touch, said to be possessed by Mr. Greatrix,* though we find it in the Philosophical Transactions. The miracles of the old testament were all performed in those ages of which we have no credible history; what reply then can be made to those who affirm that miracles have always been confined to the early and fabulous times; that all nations have had them, but that they disappeared in proportion as men became enlightened, and capable of discovering imposture and priestcraft.

2. Suppose a book to be published, containing assertions of historical facts long past, which had no collateral testimony of other authors; suppose those facts in general to be improbable and incredible; suppose the book to be anonymous, or, which is worse, ushered into the world under the name of a person who, from the internal evidence of the thing, could not have written it; can it be imagined that such a book would find credit among people who had the least pretensions to reason or common sense? Which, then, is the readiest way of confuting the enemies of our holy and only true religion, who do not scruple to affirm that many books of canonical scripture are in this predicament? They observe that the books of the Pentateuch bear many strong marks of an author long posterior to Moses; that the book of Numbers (Numb. xxi. 14) quotes the book of the Wars of the Lord, which, as first written, was

* Lowther's abridgment, v. iii. p. 11. Greatrix published a pamphlet to which the attestations of Boyle, Wilkins, Cudworth, and many other great men, were affixed. Vide Life of St. Eyremont, printed with his works in English, 3 vols. 8vo.

most probably the book which Moses wrote ; that Moses could not have written the account of his own death and burial in Deuteronomy, (Deut. xxxiv.) which nevertheless has no mark to distinguish it from the rest of the book. And supposing these and other objections of the like nature to be removed, what must we say in reply to their remark, that the scripture, which we believe to be dictated by the inspiration of the unerring God, is frequently (Vide infra.) contradictory with regard to facts, and very often represents the all-wise creator (Gen. vi. 6, 7, also Exod. vii. 3. xi. 9, 10. and 1 Sam. xv. 35) as angry, repenting, unjust, arbitrary, &c. and that consequently we must either give up that dependence, which we naturally place on his goodness and rectitude, or reject those writings which represent him as a demon ? Do not your lordships apprehend, that for the want of better arguments, we shall be under the necessity of recurring to the *argumentum pillorii*, or of adopting some of those gentle methods which were lawfully used for the conversion of heretics in the mild and pious reign of Mary, queen of England.

3. Is the account of the creation and fall of man, in the book of Genesis, physical or allegorical ? Did God create light before the sun ? How could he divide the light from darkness, since darkness is nothing but the mere privation of light ? How could time be divided into days, before the creation of the sun, since a day is the time between sun-rise and sun-set ? How could the firmament be created since there is no firmament, and the false notion of its existence is no more than an imagination of the ancient Grecians ?

4. The scriptures were certainly written for the purpose of being understood, or for no purpose at all. A mystery, that is to say, an assertion or theorem, which the human understanding is incapable of comprehending, must likewise be inexpressible in human speech ; we cannot, therefore, avail ourselves of the short and elegant method of clearing and elucidating difficult parts of scripture, by the use of the word mystery, but how shall we, without this happy resource, explain the business of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, of a speaking serpent, and of a tree of life, which God was obliged to guard by cherubim and a flaming sword, lest man should eat of the fruit and become immortal ?

5. The serpent was afflicted with the curse of going upon his belly. The scoffers seem to think it no curse at all ; for as they take it for granted that he went upon his back before this unfortunate transaction, they apprehend it was doing him a singular piece of service to reverse him, the latter position being evidently the most convenient. They also take notice, that no animal can subsist upon dust, and that whatever the individual serpent in question might have done, the serpents of modern times are so profane, that they universally reject so dry a food ; and, by a second act of impiety, emancipate themselves from the consequences of the first.

6. The account of the flood is very embarrassing. It is described as the effects of natural agents in the hands of God. It rained ; no mention is made of waters created for the purpose. The deluge was universal ; all the high hills, that were under the whole heavens, were covered ; and it ceased not by the annihilation of the waters, but they were evaporated by a wind. Now from whence came the water ? The weight

of the whole atmosphere, with all its vapours, is equal to no more than a hollow sphere of three or four and thirty feet thickness, environing the whole globe, and consequently the whole of its contents, if condensed into water, could not deluge the earth to the height of an ordinary house. It is to no purpose to break open the fountains of the abyss, or great deep, if any such fountains there are, for gravity would prevent the waters from issuing out; neither can we easily persuade infidels, that the windows of heaven were opened, while they know it has no windows; so that we have but three or four and thirty feet of water to deluge the highest mountains, some of which are more than fifteen thousand feet high.*

7. The weak in faith find themselves equally at a loss respecting the ark. It seems strange to them, that so vast an assemblage of animals could be inclosed in an ark or chest, which had but one window, (which window was kept shut for more than five months) without being stifled for want of air: it appears equally remarkable that Noah and his three sons could unstow and serve out the daily allowance of provisions and water to the passengers; and if their wives were supposed to help them, the work to be done is still prodigious. The lions, and other carnivorous animals, must have lived on salt provisions; which, no doubt, they were glad of, as seafaring people are not very nice, especially in long voyages.

8. If God set his bow in the clouds, as a token of his covenant with mankind after the flood, ought we not to conclude, that he at that time established the law of the various refrangibility and reflexivity of the rays of light, and consequently that before the flood many optical experiments, which are common with us, would not then have succeeded? For example, a man could not have made a rainbow by spouting water out of his mouth; Mr. Dolland's acromatic telescopes would have been no better than common ones; natural bodies must have appeared all of one colour, &c.

9. What answer must we give to those who are inclined to deny that an all-powerful and just God could make use of the most unjustifiable means to attain his great purpose of aggrandizing the posterity of Abraham? Could this benevolent and just being approve of the ungenerous advantage which Jacob took over his faint and hungry brother? Could this omnipotent and upright spirit adopt no method of distinguishing his favourite Jacob, but that of fraud and lies, by which he deprived the same unsuspecting brother of his father's blessing? Or, in short, how shall we justify God for the continual distinction and favour he is said to have bestowed on a people who, from their own annals, appear to have been unparalleled for cruelty, (See acts of Joshua; also 1 Sam. xv. &c.) ingratitude, inurbanity, &c.?

10. When the unbelievers affirm that a just God could not punish Pharaoh for a hardness of heart of which he (Exod. vii. 3, 4, and ix. 9, 10) himself (God) was evidently the cause, we usually answer, that the potter has power over the clay to fashion it as he lists; but when in re-

* The Indian Alps are 26,862 feet above the level of the ocean. See Col. Kirkpatrick's History of Nepaul, and Asiatic Researches, vol viii.

ply, they take notice, that if the clay in the hands of the potter were capable of happiness or misery, according to the fashion impressed on it, the potter must be malevolent and cruel who can give the preference to inflicting pain instead of happiness, then we are obliged to be silent, in hopes that your lordships will condescend to supply us with better arguments than any we are acquainted with at present.

To be continued.

MAHOMEDANISM.

Mr. Editor—At a moment when public attention is occupied with the war, now waging with so much fury, between the Russians and the Turks, and when the *pious* are anticipating the speedy downfall of the latter power, in conformity, as they assert, to ancient prophecy, the readers of the *Correspondent* may, perhaps, be amused, if not instructed, by the perusal of the following summary or abstract of the religious tenets of Mahomet, as originally promulgated by him, and still adhered to by his followers:—

Mahomedanism is professed by the Turks, Persians, and several nations among the Africans, and many among the East Indies. The Mahomedans divide their religion into two general parts, faith and practice: of which the first is divided into six distinct branches; belief in God, his angels, in his scriptures, in his prophets, in the resurrection and final judgment, and in God's absolute decrees. The points relating to practice are, prayer, with washings, &c. alms, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca, and circumcision.

1. Of the Mahomedan faith:—That Mahomet, and those among his followers who are reckoned orthodox, had and continue to have notions of a God and his attributes, appears so plain from the Koran itself, and all the Mahomedan divines, that it would be loss of time to refute those who suppose the God of Mahomet to be different from the christian God.

2. The existence of angels, and their purity, are absolutely required to be believed in the Koran: and he is reckoned an infidel who denies there are such beings, or hates any of them, or asserts any distinction of sexes among them. They believe them to have pure and subtle bodies, created of fire; that they neither eat nor drink, nor propagate species; that they have various forms and offices, some adoring God in different postures, others singing praises to him, or interceding for mankind. They hold that some of them are employed in writing down the actions of men; others in carrying the throne of God, and other services.

The four angels, on whom they look as more evidently in God's favour, and often mentioned on account of the offices assigned them, are, Gabriel, to whom they give several titles, particularly those of the holy spirit and the angel of revelations, supposing him to be honoured by God with a greater confidence than any other, and to be employed in writing down the divine decrees; Michael, the friend and protector of the Jews; Azrael, the angel of death, who separates mens' souls from their bodies; and Irasil, whose office it will be to sound the trumpet at the resurrection.

The Mahomedans also believe, that two guardian angels attend on every man, to observe and write down his actions, being changed every day, and therefore called *ai Moakkibat*, or "the angels who continually succeed one another."

The devil, whom Mahomet names *Eblis*, from his despair, was once one of those angels who are nearest to God's presence, called *Azazil*; and fell, according to the doctrine of the Koran, for refusing to pay homage to Adam at the command of God.

Besides angels and devils, the Mahomedans are taught by the Koran to believe an intermediate order of creatures, which they call *jin* or *genii*, created also of fire, but of a grosser fabric than angels, since they eat and drink, and propagate their species, and are subject to death. Some of these are supposed to be good and others bad, and capable of future salvation or damnation, as men are; whence Mahomet pretended to be sent for the conversion of genii as well as men.

3. As to the scriptures, the Mahomedans are taught by the Koran, that God, in divers ages of the world, gave revelations of his will in writing to several prophets, the whole and every one of which it is absolutely necessary for a good Moslem to believe. The number of these sacred books were, according to them, a hundred and four. Of which ten were given to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Edris or Enoch, ten to Abraham; and the other four, being the Pentateuch, the psalms, the gospel, and the Koran, were successively delivered to Moses, David, Jesus, and Mahomet; which last being the seal of the prophets, those revelations are now closed, and no more are to be expected. All these divine books, except the four last, they agree to be now entirely lost, and their contents unknown; though the Sabians have several books which they attribute to some of the antediluvian prophets. And of those four, the Pentateuch, psalms, and gospel, they say, have undergone so many alterations and corruptions, that, though there may be possibly some part of the true word of God therein, yet no credit is to be given to the present copies in the hands of the Jews and christians. The Mahomedans have also a gospel in Arabic, attributed to St. Barnabas; wherein the history of Jesus Christ is related in a manner very different from what we find in the gospels, and correspondent to those traditions which Mahomet has followed in his Koran. Of this gospel the Moriscoes in Africa have a translation in Spanish; and there is, in the library of Prince Eugene, of Savoy, a manuscript of some antiquity, containing an Italian translation of the same gospel. This book appears to be no original forgery of the Mahomedans; though they have, no doubt, interpolated and altered it since, the better to serve their purpose; and in particular, instead of the *paraclete* or *comforter*, they have in this gospel inserted the word *periclyte*, that is, the "famous," or "illustrious," by which they pretend their prophet was foretold by name, that being the signification of *Mohammed* in Arabic: and this they say to justify that passage of the Koran, where Jesus Christ is formally asserted to have foretold his coming, under his other name of *Ahmed*, which is derived from the same root as *Mohammed*, and of the same import.

4. The number of prophets which have been from time to time sent by God into the world, amounts to no less than 224,000 according to

one Mahomedan tradition; or to 124,000, according to another: among whom 313 were apostles, sent with special commissions to reclaim mankind from infidelity and superstition; and six of them brought new laws or dispensations, which successively abrogated the preceding: these were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mahomet. All the prophets in general, the Mahomedans believe to have been free from great sins and errors of consequence, and professors of one and the same religion, (that is Islam) notwithstanding the different laws and institutions which they observed. They allow of degrees among them, and hold some of them to be more excellent and honorable than others. The first place they give to the revealers and establishers of new dispensations, and the next to the apostles.

In this great number of prophets, they not only reckon divers patriarchs and persons named in scripture, but not recorded to have been prophets, (wherein the Jewish and christian writers have sometimes led the way) as Adam, Seth, Lot, Ishmael, Nun, Joshua, &c. and introduce some of them under different names, as Enoch, Heber, and Jethro, who are called in the Koran, Edris, Hud, and Shoaib; but several others, whose very names do not appear in scripture, though they endeavour to find some persons there to fix them on, as Saleh, Khedr, Dhu'lkeft, &c.

5. The belief of a general resurrection and a future judgment:—

When a corpse is laid in the grave, they say he is received by an angel, who gives him notice of the coming of the two examiners; who are two black livid angels, of a terrible appearance, named *Monker* and *Nakir*. These order the dead person to sit upright; and examine him concerning his faith, as to the unity of God, and the mission of Mahomet: if he answer rightly, they suffer the body to rest in peace, and it is refreshed by the air of paradise: but if not, they beat him on the temples with iron maces till he roars out for anguish so loud, that he is heard by all from east to west, except men and genii. They then press the earth on the corpse, which is gnawed and stung till the resurrection by 99 dragons, with seven heads each; or, as others say, their sins will become venomous beasts, the grievous ones stinging like dragons, the smaller like scorpions, and the other like serpents; circumstances which some understand in a figurative sense.

To be continued.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1828.

The public is already sufficiently acquainted with the fact of the recent murder of Mrs. Newman. On this subject, the *National Advocate* of Saturday last, has the following paragraph:—

“The Commercial says that the man printed the Correspondent, an *infidel* paper, and that Mrs. N. was opposed to his doing so;” this, of itself, is sufficient to induce his condemnation, and to prejudice a jury against him. Let it be our pride, that the vilest wretch in this land of freedom, where he puts himself upon his “country,” is to be *tried impartially*, and is compelled to admit the justice of that *verdict*, (a hallowed name) which may render his life a forfeit to his crimes.”

Notwithstanding the apparent wish of the writer of this paragraph, that Johnson should be "tried impartially," it is evident that his object was to create a prejudice against him. Had he not intended this, why give publicity to a circumstance, which he confidently asserts 'is, *of itself, sufficient to induce his condemnation, and to prejudice a jury against him.*" Why not refrain from alluding to a transaction, which, in the writer's apprehension, would be attended with consequences so fatal, as to induce a jury to condemn a fellow-being to death, however much he might otherwise be an object of mercy. Surely, if the *pious* editor of the Advocate had been *sincere* in wishing the criminal to be dealt with only in reference to the crime of which he is accused, he never would have endeavoured to rouse the angry feelings of bigotry and fanaticism against him.

"The man printed the *Correspondent*, an *infidel* paper—*this, of itself, is sufficient to induce his condemnation.*" On the same principle, if Johnson had been carrying on business in Constantinople at the time he committed the murder, and was then engaged in printing the bible for the bible society, *this of itself* would have been sufficient to induce his condemnation—We presume the editor of the Advocate is aware, that the *bible* is regarded by the Mahomedans in the same light that christians regard the *Correspondent*, and that they never speak of the followers of the cross, without terming them *infidel dogs*.

But, independent of the intolerance displayed in attempting to stigmatize any individual on account of his religious opinions, the editor of the Advocate has taken upon himself to say, that the jury who may try the case, must, of necessity, condemn the prisoner, because he printed an infidel paper. We have no doubt that if the jury were composed of such men as this editor, Johnson's condemnation would be certain; for a man who once consigned *our paper* to the flames merely because our opinions did not coincide with his, would not hesitate to serve us, and all those in our employment, in a similar manner, if it were in his power. But we live in a country where the sword has been wrested from the hand of fanaticism; and although the most infamous secret measures are resorted to for the purpose of destroying the avowed friends of liberal principles, we should consider ourselves as parties to an atrocious libel on the community, were we to subscribe to the assertion of the editor of the Advocate, that the *speculative* opinions of the accused ought to be taken into the account by a jury, when judging of his guilt or innocence. The advanced state of knowledge to which the age has arrived, utterly forbids the recognition of a principle so monstrously unjust.

But it is not the fact that Johnson was printer of the *Correspondent* at the time, or for several weeks *before* he perpetrated the murder; if, indeed, he could ever have been considered the printer, when he had no property either in the press or types, and never, as we believe, composed a line, or pulled a sheet of the paper. Supposing, however, that he had actually discharged the duties of printer, why should this circumstance in any way militate against him? As well might the type founder, and paper maker, who furnish the types and paper to print the work, or the bookbinder who binds it, be placed beyond the pale of law and justice as to condemn, or even to censure Johnson for engaging in a business

which, we defy the most strenuous advocates of religion to show, in any way, violated the principles of strict morality.

It is evident that the circumstance of Johnson having had some connexion with the printing of this paper, has been obtruded on public notice, for the purpose of creating an impression that liberal principles have an immoral tendency. But before this can have the effect intended, it must first be shown that the unfortunate man advocated, or entertained these principles ; which, we are satisfied, can not be done, because on no occasion have we ever heard him utter a word hostile to the prevailing religion.

This much we have to say in reference to the unfortunate individual, against whom a prejudice has been attempted to be created by bigotry and intolerance. As regards ourselves, and the cause we have espoused, we now, as formerly, challenge the editor of the Advocate, and all other editors like him, who feel so sensitive about their " holy religion," to enter the field of argument, and to discuss its pretended truths like honest men, instead of endeavouring to prop their rotten system by detraction, calumny, and abuse. And in order to give them some scope by which they may employ their pens in aid of their creed, we call on them to furnish us with proofs of the *existence* of the founder of their religion, and of the *authenticity* of the books which they say contain a faithful history of his life and mission—We *deny* that this has yet been done ; and as the clergy are the authors of all that has been written on the subject, and, it is presumed, are prepared with evidence sufficient to *demonstrate* the truth of their assertions, we cannot think they will any longer deny themselves the advantage of this infallible mode of reaching conviction, especially when they find that the words *infidel*, *blasphemer*, and even *atheist*, are not considered of that terrific nature as they were when mankind were entirely under the influence of superstition. If the principles we maintain are erroneous, this can easily be shown. The *twenty millions of dollars* which the priesthood draw annually from the pockets of the people of the United States, ought surely to leave some of them at leisure to defend a system in which they have so deep an interest. In us they will find an antagonist unaided by any such means, and depending solely for victory on arguments drawn from the evidence of facts. If our challenge is declined, we shall regard this as an acknowledgment on the part of our opponents, that they consider their cause untenable.

From the Oneida Observer.

"PROFESSION NOT PRINCIPLE."

It is believed there are already abundant indications of the temper of the public mind in relation to the principles on which a certain combination line of stages has been got up in this section of the country, to convince every observing mind that those principles will meet with but little encouragement from the great body of this intelligent community. This matter has already been sufficiently discussed, both on the grounds of reason and of revelation, to awaken public attention to the subject ; and this is probably all that was necessary. It is not my object to renew these discussions on those grounds : my business, at present, is simply

to state facts, by way of showing how little the professions of some men agree with their actual practice; and how soon the first cardinal principles of this whole system have been abandoned by those who have been the loudest in proclaiming them.

It is now about five months since the pioneer line of stages, so called, was put into motion. It was established under the following distinct and explicit professions:—To run but six days in the week, and to abstain from all labour on the Sabbath. To charge fixed and uniform prices for their fare, and in no case to underbid other stages or other conveyances, for the procuring of passengers. Now what will many credulous and confiding people think, when they learn, as learn they will, that in *none* of these respects have these solemn engagements, thus volunteered to the public, been observed. For it is now freely asserted, as capable of indisputable proof—

1st. That in various instances their stages have already been run on the Sabbath.

2d. That at their various stations, are their agents habitually employed during the Sabbath, in the procurement of passengers, and making all other arrangements for starting on Monday.

3d. That their habitual practice is to underbid other lines of stages and boats, and to have in some instances as many different rates of fare in the same stage as there are passengers.

4th. That they have been lately sedulously and secretly engaged in circulating petitions to the general post office, to aid them in procuring the mail contracts; and have distinctly avowed, that if the mail must be carried on the Sabbath, they might as well do it as any one else, and that consideration should not prevent their taking the contract.

No one of these facts, it is believed, will by them be seriously denied; and until they are, we hope to see no more weekly anathemas "*Recorded*" against "old line Sabbath breakers."

CONSISTENCY.

The above article we publish by the solicitations of several gentlemen. We are averse always to religious disputes; this is a subject which we believe can no longer justly be blended with a name or object so foreign to its professions. We therefore yield our columns to divest it of a cloak under which it purposed to mislead the honest and unsuspecting. If the charges against them are unjust let the world know it.—*Editor.*

Free Press Association.—A special meeting of the members will be held in the Temple of Science, on Sunday, to-morrow, the 30th inst., at half-past 10 o'clock, A. M. As business of importance will be brought before the meeting, a punctual attendance is expected.

* * We tender our unfeigned thanks to our Baltimore friends for the substantial proofs they have given of their sincere devotion to the cause of truth, and of mental emancipation.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Moral doctrines of Socrates, the Athenian philosopher and moralist, who flourished about four thousand years before the Christian era.

Be wise and beneficial, because what wants reason wants respect.

To be employed is good and beneficial, to be idle evil and hurtful.

They that do good are employed ; they that spend their time in vain and senseless recreations, are idle.

To do good and to follow virtue is the best course of life.

They are the best and most useful men, and most pleasing to the Almighty, who follow any art or calling ; they who follow none are useless to the public and despised by God.

A just man and a happy man are one.

They who divide honesty and profit have done an unjust act ; for they are truly wicked who forsake justice for worldly profit.

Happiness consists in learning and virtue, not in the frail gifts of fortune.

Virtue is the beauty, vice the deformity of the soul.

In the life of man, as in an image, every part ought to be beautiful.

They live without perturbation who are conscious of having committed no evil.

Envy is the saw of the soul.

The performance of justice and of all the other virtues is wisdom.

A pious man is he who knows and does what is lawful towards the gods : a just man is he who knows and practises what is just and honorable towards men.

The greatest of all vices is ingratitude : the greatest of obligations is that towards parents.

A disobedient child will never receive the blessings of God.

A statue stands firm on its base : a virtuous man on his good resolutions.

Abstain from sordid and unjust pleasures.

Think not those faithful who praise all thy words and actions : but esteem those who correct thy faults.

Good men must let the world see that their manners are more firm than to bear assaults.

To the utmost of your ability relieve the necessities of your friend.

They who violate friendship are wicked ; though they may escape the punishment due to them by the world, yet they shall not escape the vengeance of God.

The law is not made for the good, but only for evil-doers : good men's law is in their own clear conscience.

Thanksgiving is due to God, praise to good men.

They who are undeservedly accused ought to be defended.

They who excel others in good qualities or virtue ought to be praised.

Wisdom is the composure of the soul ; and they are the wisest men who err against nature and reason the least.

Be not over forward in speech, for many times the tongue hath cut off the head.

The best and most rational way of worshipping God is to do what he commands, to abhor vice and to follow the practice of virtue.

Our prayers should be for blessings in general, for God knows best what is good for us ; our offerings proportioned to our abilities, for he considers integrity not display.

An honest death is far better than a dishonest life.

Contentedness is like a short or pleasant way, it has much delight, little toil.

We ought not to seek pleasure in others, but in ourselves, the body being predisposed according as it ought.

There can be no better way to obtain glory than to endeavour to be good as well as to seem such.

Men must obey the laws of their country—wives their husbands.

The reproof of a father is a kind remedy, it brings more ease than pain.

He is the richest man who is contented with the least, for content is the riches of nature.

It is arrogance to speak all and be unwilling to hear any thing.

Wicked men cannot be friends amongst themselves nor with the good.

We esteem not him who is of the highest birth, but who is possessed of the most noble qualities.

The Jews..—In the “General Evening Post” of June 21, 1777, a paragraph states, that “the following circumstance is not more ridiculous than true ;” and it proceeds to relate, that some years before, at Stamford, in the province of Connecticut, America, it was determined to build a church ; but “though the church was much wanted, as many people in that neighbourhood were at a loss for a place of public worship, yet the work stood still a considerable time for a want of nails (for it was a wooden building) at last, a Jew merchant made them a present of a cask, amounting to four hundred weight, and thus enabled the church to proceed.” Such an act might make some christians exclaim, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a *Jew* rather than remain a Jew-oppressor, under the name of a christian.” It is not, however, on private, but on open grounds and high principle, that justice should spontaneously be rendered to the Jews. The Jew and the Christian, the Catholie and the Protestant, the Episcopalian and the Dissenter, the Calvinist and the Arminian, the Baptist and the Unitarian, all persons, of all denominations, are willed and empowered by their common document to acts of justice and mercy, and they now meet as brethren in social life to perform them ; but the ensued claim of their elder brother, the *Jew*, is acknowledged no where, save in the conscience of every “just man made perfect.”

Carpocrates.—The followers of Carpocrates regarded angels as adversaries, who delighted in beholding men sunk in pleasure and debauchery. These sectarians are said to have asserted, that an indulgence in the basest and most vicious pleasures, was a species of contribution which the soul owed to angels ; and on this account the most infamous deeds became acts of virtue. They pretended, that in this conduct they were conforming to the words of St. Matthew, v. 25. Carpocrates himself taught, that the soul could not be purified till it had committed all kinds of abominations, making that a necessary condition of perfection. The impious tenets of this man were calculated to destroy all virtue.

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Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, Elizabeth-street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A lecture will be delivered to-morrow, afternoon, (Sunday) the 30th November, at 3 o'clock.

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